THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) and (b) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Ministry of Tourism, however, provides financial assistance for tourism projects based on the proposals received from them subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority. The Ministry of Tourism also monitors the physical and financial progress of the projects through site visits and review meetings/conferences. The Ministry of Tourism has taken steps to achieve synergy for development and promotion of tourism in the country among the Central Ministries, States/Union Territories and other Stakeholders.

Developing coastal cities as cruise hub of the region

1633. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:

SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether we are planning to develop Mumbai, Kolkata or any other coastal city as the cruise hub of the region, leveraging on our excellent air, land and sea connectivity, thereby attracting more travellers from the Middle-East, Gulf, etc;

(b) if so, has any study been undertaken to find out the number of foreign tourists who combined land tourism with cruise facilities being provided either of our own or on code-sharing basis with foreign cruise infrastructure; and

(c) will special campaigns be launched by our foreign-based tourist offices or through print and media mode to popularize our varied landscapes, warm hospitality and multi-cultural shining and tempting ambience?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) The Government has approved the cruise shipping policy to develop and promote Cruise Tourism in India. Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned Rs. 1450.00 lakh to Cochin Port Trust, Kochi in 2008-09 for development of tourism infrastructure at Cochin Port, Kerala.

(b) No study has been undertaken by this Ministry to find out the number of foreign tourists who combined land tourism with cruise facilities being provided either of our own or on code-sharing basis with foreign cruise infrastructure. However, Ministry of Tourism in the year 2005 had undertaken a study on "Cruise Tourism Potential & Strategy Study".

(c) Ministry of Tourism promotes cruise tourism through brochures, Compact Discs and publicity materials distributed through its Indiatourism offices in the country and abroad.

Selection of more tourist spots in the country

1634. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:

SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether to promote the growth of tourism in the country, the Union Government propose to select more tourist spots particularly coastline areas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government had discussions with the States having coastline to promote tourism spots; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (d) Identification and development of tourist spots is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, however, provides financial assistance for tourism projects on the basis of proposals received from them subject to availability of funds and inter-se priority. During the current financial year 106 projects for Rs. 398.33 crore have been sanctioned upto September, 2009 for development and promotion of tourism in the country, including the Coastal States.

Konark temple, Odisha

†1635. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his ministry is aware that stones are coming off from famous Konark Temple of Odisha on a large scale;

(b) if so, measures adopted by Government to protect it;

(c) whether State Government has drawn the attention of Central Government towards this serious issue; and

(d) whether Government have any plan to reintroduce the practice of regular sun worship by making foolproof arrangements of security of famous and sacred Sun Temple?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) to (c) A high level Technical Committee of Archaeological Survey of India has recently visited the Sun Temple Konark and found that there were no such instances of stones falling. The temple is well protected and conserved.

(d) No, Sir.

Decline of tourists to India

1636. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the number of tourist to India has been reduced substantially in 2008 and 2009 in comparison to 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007, if so, the reasons thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.